

IN THE CLAIMS:

Please amend Claims 1, 8, 15-18, 21-24, 27-30, 33, 35-37, 40, 42-44, 47-53, 59, 60, 66, 67, 74, 75, 82 and 83 as follows.

1. (Currently Amended) An image output control apparatus adapted to control output of images of input data using plural image output devices, comprising:

mode select means for selecting a cascade outputting mode so that output processing of the input data is allotted to the plural image output devices;

selection means for selecting the plural image output devices that should be used in the cascade outputting mode;

obtaining means for obtaining output media information stored in each image output device of the plural image output devices that are selected to be used in the cascade outputting mode;

judgment means for judging whether or not the plural image output devices ~~selected to be used in the cascade outputting mode~~ store the same-sized output media on the basis of the output media information obtained by said obtaining means, before a user request for causing the plural image output devices to execute an outputting operation for the cascade outputting mode is accepted from a user via a user interface unit; and

notification means for ~~notifying of~~ causing said user interface unit to provide a judgment result obtained by said judgment means, before the user request is accepted via said user interface unit; and

control means for prohibiting a reception of the user request via said user interface unit in a case where the same-sized output media are not stored in the plural image output devices, and permitting the reception of the user request via said user interface unit in a case where the same-sized output media are stored in the plural image output devices,

wherein said control means causes the plural image output devices to execute the outputting operation for the cascade outputting mode after permitting the reception of the user request and accepting the user request via said user interface unit.

2. (Previously Presented) An apparatus according to Claim 1, further comprising a display for displaying information regarding the image output devices, wherein said notification means displays a warning message on the display when said judgment means judges that the plural image output devices selected by said selection means do not have the same-sized output media.

3. (Previously Presented) An apparatus according to Claim 2, wherein it is controlled to cancel selection to be executed by said selection means when said judgment means judges that the plural image output devices selected by said selection means do not have the same-sized output media.

4. (Previously Presented) An apparatus according to Claim 1, wherein said judgment means judges whether or not the plural image output devices selected by

said selection means have the same-sized and the same-kind of output media on the basis of the output media information.

5. (Previously Presented) An apparatus according to Claim 4, further comprising a display for displaying information regarding the image output devices, wherein said notification means displays a warning message on the display when said judgment means judges that the plural image output devices selected by said selection means do not have the same-sized and the same-kind of output media.

6. (Previously Presented) An apparatus according to Claim 5, wherein it is controlled to cancel selection to be executed by said selection means when said judgment means judges that the plural image output devices selected by said selection means do not have the same-sized and the same-kind of output media.

7. (Previously Presented) An apparatus according to Claim 1, further comprising input means for inputting image data obtained by reading originals, wherein the plural image output devices can output images of image data inputted by said input means.

8. (Currently Amended) A control method of an image output control apparatus adapted to control output of images of input data using the plural image output devices, said method comprising the steps of:

selecting a cascade outputting mode so that output processing of the input data is allotted to the plural image output devices;

selecting the plural image output devices that should be used in the cascade outputting mode;

obtaining output media information stored in each image output device of the plural image output devices selected to be used in the cascade outputting mode;

judging whether or not the plural image output devices ~~selected in said selecting step~~ store the same-sized output media on the basis of the output media information obtained in said obtaining ~~step~~; step, before a user request for causing the plural image output devices to execute an outputting operation for the cascade outputting mode is accepted from a user via a user interface unit; and

notifying of a judgment result obtained in said judging step; and

controlling for prohibiting a reception of the user request via the user interface unit in a case where the same-sized output media are not stored in the plural image output devices, and permitting the reception of the user request via the user interface unit in a case where the same-sized output media are stored in the plural image output devices,

wherein controlling means causes the plural image output devices to execute said outputting operation for the cascade outputting mode after permitting the reception of the user request and accepting the user request via said user interface unit.

9. (Previously Presented) A method according to Claim 8, wherein the image output control apparatus has a display for displaying information regarding the image output devices, and said notifying step displays a warning message on the display when said judging step judges that the plural image output devices selected in said selecting step do not have the same-sized output media.

10. (Previously Presented) A method according to Claim 9, wherein it is controlled to cancel selection to be executed in said selecting step when said judging step judges that the plural image output devices selected in said selecting step do not have the same-sized output media.

11. (Previously Presented) A method according to Claim 8, wherein said judging step judges whether or not the plural image output devices selected in said selecting step have the same-sized and the same-kind of output media on the basis of the output media information.

12. (Previously Presented) A method according to Claim 11, wherein the image output control apparatus has a display for displaying information regarding the image output devices, and said notifying step displays a warning message on the display when said judging step judges that the plural image output devices selected in said selecting step do not have the same-sized and the same-kind of output media.

13. (Previously Presented) A method according to Claim 12, wherein it is controlled to cancel selection to be executed in said selecting step when said judging step judges that the plural image output devices selected in said selecting step do not have the same-sized and the same-kind of output media.

14. (Previously Presented) A method according to Claim 8, further comprising an inputting step of inputting image data obtained by reading originals, wherein the plural image output devices can output images of image data inputted in said inputting step.

15. (Currently Amended) A storage medium which stores computer-readable program codes for executing control processing of an image output control apparatus adapted to control output of images of input data using the plural image output devices, comprising the codes of:

executing mode selection processing of selecting a cascade outputting mode so that output processing of the input data is allotted to the plural image output devices;

executing selection processing of selecting the plural image output devices that should be used in the cascade outputting mode;

executing obtaining processing of obtaining output media information stored in each image output device of the plural image output devices that should be used in the cascade outputting mode;

executing judgment processing of judging whether or not the plural image output devices ~~selected to be used in the cascade outputting mode~~ store the same-sized output media on the basis of the output media information obtained by said obtaining processing, before a user request for causing the plural image output devices to execute an outputting operation for the cascade outputting is accepted from a user via a user interface unit; and

executing notification processing of notifying of a judgment result obtained by said judgment processing; and

executing control processing of prohibiting a reception of the user request via said user interface unit in a case where the same-sized output media are not stored in the plural image output devices, and permitting the reception of the user request via said user interface unit in a case where the same-sized output media are stored in the plural image output devices,

wherein said control processing causes the plural image output devices to execute the outputting operation for the cascade outputting mode after permitting the reception of the user request and accepting the user request via said user interface unit.

16. (Currently Amended) An image output system comprising:  
plural image output devices,  
each of said plural image output devices comprising:  
a memory unit adapted to store a plurality of data;

a printer unit adapted to perform print processing of data stored in said memory unit to an output medium;

an acceptor adapted to accept, via a user interface unit, an instruction for causing user's ~~a local~~ device and another image output device to execute ~~start~~ a cascade printing operation that print processing of a series of data is able to allot to said user's ~~local~~ device and said another ~~other~~ image output device, from a user; and

a controller adapted to prohibit a reception of the instruction via said user interface unit from the user in a case where the same output medium is not set in both of said user's device and said another image output device, and to permit the reception of the instruction via said user interface unit from the user in a case where the same output medium is set in both of said user's device and said another image output device,

wherein said controller allows execution of the cascade printing operation in said user's device and said another image output device, after permitting the reception of instruction via said user interface unit from the user and accepting the instruction via said user interface unit

~~a controller adapted to permit an execution of the cascade printing operation in said local device and said other image output device, according to the instruction from the user, when the same output medium is set in both of said local device and said other image output device,~~

~~wherein said controller inhibits an execution of the cascade printing operation that uses a different output medium in each of said local device and said other~~

~~image output device, before the instruction from the user is accepted, when the same output medium is not set in both said local device and said other image output device.~~

17. (Currently Amended) A system according to claim 16, wherein said controller inhibits said execution of said cascade printing operation before the instruction from the user is accepted, by controlling beforehand said acceptor so as not to accept the instruction from the user, when the same output medium is not set in both of said user's ~~local~~ device and said another ~~other~~ image output device.

18. (Currently Amended) A system according to claim 16, wherein the instruction is accepted via a user interface unit including a display unit used for said image output device, wherein said controller inhibits the execution of the cascade printing operation before the instruction from the user is accepted, by controlling a display of said display unit so as not to accept the instruction, when the same output medium is not set in both of said user's ~~local~~ device and said another ~~other~~ image output device.

19. (Previously Presented) A system according to claim 16, wherein each of said plural image output devices includes an original image reading unit.

20. (Previously Presented) A system according to claim 16, wherein each of said plural image output devices is arranged so as to effect the cascade printing

operation of at least one of image data output from a scanner and image data output from a computer.

21. (Currently Amended) A system according to claim 16, wherein each of said plural image output devices includes an obtaining unit adapted to obtain information of the ~~other~~ another image output ~~device~~ devices, and wherein said controller discriminates the output medium using the information obtained by said obtaining unit.

22. (Currently Amended) An image output device system comprising:  
plural image output devices,  
each of said plural image output devices comprising:  
a memory unit adapted to store a plurality of data;  
a printer unit adapted to perform print processing of data stored in said memory unit to an output medium;  
an acceptor adapted to accept via a user interface unit, an instruction for causing ~~a local~~ user's device and ~~an other~~ another image output device to execute ~~start~~ a cascade printing operation that print processing of a series of data is able to allot to said user's ~~local~~ device and said another ~~other~~ image output device, from a user; and  
a controller adapted to prohibit a reception of the instruction via said user interface unit from the user in a case where an output medium of the same size is not set in both of said user's device and said another image output device, and to permit the reception of the instruction via said user interface unit from the user in a case where the output

medium of the same size is set in both of said user's device and said another image output device,

wherein said controller allows execution of the cascade printing operation in said user's device and said another image output device, after permitting the reception of the instruction via said user interface unit from the user and accepting the instruction via said user interface unit

~~a controller adapted to permit an execution of the cascade printing operation in said local device and said other image output device, according to the instruction from the user, when an output medium of the same size is set in both of said local device and said other image output device,~~

~~wherein said controller inhibits an execution of the cascade printing operation that uses an output medium of a different size in each of said local device and said other image output device, before the instruction from the user is accepted, when the output medium of the same size is not set in both of said local device and said other image output device.~~

23. (Currently Amended) A system according to claim 22, wherein said controller inhibits said execution of said cascade printing operation before the instruction from the user is accepted, by controlling beforehand said acceptor so as not to accept the instruction from the user, when the output medium of the same size is not set in both of said user's ~~local~~ device and said another ~~other~~ image output device.

24. (Currently Amended) A system according to claim 22, wherein the instruction is accepted via a user interface unit including a display unit used for said image output device,

wherein said controller inhibits the execution of said cascade printing operation before the instruction from the user is accepted, by controlling a display of said display unit so as not to accept the instruction, when the output medium of the same size is not set in both of said user's local device and said another ~~other~~ image output device.

25. (Previously Presented) A system according to claim 22, wherein each of said plural image output devices includes an original image reading unit.

26. (Previously Presented) A system according to claim 22, wherein each of said plural image output devices is arranged so as to effect the cascade printing operation of at least one of image data output from a scanner and image data output from a computer.

27. (Currently Amended) A system according to claim 22, wherein each of said plural image output devices includes an obtaining unit adapted to obtain information of the another ~~other~~ image output device ~~devices~~, and wherein said controller discriminates the output medium using the information obtained by said obtaining unit.

28. (Currently Amended) An image output system comprising:

plural image output devices,

each of said plural image output devices comprising:

a memory unit adapted to store a plurality of data;

a printer unit adapted to perform print processing of data stored in said memory unit to an output medium;

an acceptor adapted to accept, via a user interface unit, an instruction for causing user's ~~a local~~ device and another ~~an other~~ image output device to execute ~~start~~ a cascade printing operation that print processing of a series of data is able to allot to said user's ~~local~~ device and said another ~~other~~ image output device, from a user; and

a controller adapted to prohibit a reception of the instruction via said user interface unit from the user in a case where an output medium of the same type is not set in both of said user's device and said another image output device, and to permit the reception of the instruction via said user interface unit from the user in a case where the output medium of the same type is set in both of said user's device and said another image output device,

wherein said controller allows execution of the cascade printing operation in said user's device and said another image output device, after permitting the reception of the instruction via said user interface unit from the user and accepting the instruction via said user interface unit

~~a controller adapted to permit an execution of the cascade printing operation in said local device and said other image output device, according to the instruction from~~

~~the user, when an output medium of the same type is set in both of said local device and said other image output device;~~

~~wherein said controller inhibits an execution of the cascade printing operation that uses an output medium of a different type in each of said local device and said other image output device, before the instruction from the user is accepted, when the output medium of the same type is not set in both of said local device and said other image output device.~~

29. (Currently Amended) A system according to claim 28, wherein said controller inhibits the execution of the cascade printing operation before the instruction from the user is accepted, by controlling beforehand said acceptor so as not to accept the instruction from the user, when the output medium of the same type is not set in both of said user's local device and said another other image output device.

30. (Currently Amended) A system according to claim 28, wherein the instruction is accepted via a user interface unit including a display unit used for said image output device, and

wherein said controller inhibits the execution of the cascade printing operation before the instruction from the user is accepted, by controlling a display of said display unit so as not to accept the instruction, when the output medium of the same type is not set in both of said user's local device and said another other image output device.

31. (Previously Presented) A system according to claim 28, wherein each of said plural image output devices includes an original image reading unit.

32. (Previously Presented) A system according to claim 28, wherein each of said plural image output devices is arranged so as to effect the cascade printing operation of at least one of image data output from a scanner and image data output from a computer.

33. (Currently Amended) A system according to claim 28, wherein each of said plural image output devices includes an obtaining unit adapted to obtain information of the another ~~other~~ image output device ~~devices~~, and wherein said controller discriminates the output medium using the information obtained by said obtaining unit.

34. (Previously Presented) A system according to claim 28, wherein the type of the output medium is one of ordinary paper, card, thin paper, OHP and color sheet.

35. (Currently Amended) An image output system comprising:  
plural image output devices,  
each of said plural image output devices comprising:  
a memory unit adapted to store a plurality of data;  
a printer unit adapted to perform print processing of data stored in said  
memory unit to an output medium;

an acceptor adapted to accept, via a user interface unit, an instruction for causing user's a local device and an another other image output device to execute start a cascade printing operation that print processing of a series of data is able to allot to said user's local device and said another other image output device, from a user; and

a controller adapted to prohibit a reception of the instruction via said user interface unit from the user in a case where an output medium of the same size and the same type is not set in both of said user's device and said another image output device, and to permit the reception of the instruction via said user interface unit from the user in a case where the output medium of the same size and the same type is set in both of said user's device and said another image output device,

wherein said controller allows execution of the cascade printing operation in said user's device and said another image output device, after permitting the reception of the instruction via said user interface unit from the user and accepting the instruction via said user interface unit

~~a controller adapted to permit an execution of the cascade printing operation in said local device and said other image output device according to the instruction from the user, when an output medium of the same size and the same type is set in both of said local device and said other image output device,~~

~~wherein said controller inhibits an execution of the cascade printing operation that uses an output medium of a different size and a different type in each of said local device and said other image output device, before the instruction from the user is~~

~~accepted, when the output medium of the same size and the same type is not set in both of said local device and said other image output device.~~

36. (Currently Amended) A system according to claim 35, wherein said controller inhibits said execution of said cascade printing operation before the instruction from the user is accepted, by controlling beforehand said acceptor so as not to accept the instruction from the user, when the output medium of the same size and the same type is not set in both of said user's local device and said another other image output device.

37. (Currently Amended) A system according to claim 35, wherein the instruction is accepted via a user interface unit including a display unit used for said image output device, and

wherein said controller inhibits the execution of said cascade printing operation before the instruction from the user is accepted, by controlling a display of said display unit so as not to accept the instruction, when the output medium of the same size and the same type is not set in both of said user's local device and said another other image output device.

38. (Previously Presented) A system according to claim 35, wherein each of said plural image output devices includes an original image reading unit.

39. (Previously Presented) A system according to claim 35, wherein each of said plural image output devices is arranged so as to effect the cascade printing operation of at least one of image data output from a scanner and image data output from a computer.

40. (Currently Amended) A system according to claim 35, wherein each of said plural image output devices includes an obtaining unit adapted to obtain information of the ~~other~~ another image output device ~~devices~~, and wherein said controller discriminates the output medium using the information obtained by said obtaining unit.

41. (Previously Presented) A system according to claim 35, wherein the type of the output medium is one of ordinary paper, card, thin paper, OHP and color sheet.

42. (Currently Amended) An image output system comprising:  
plural image output devices,  
each of said plural image output devices comprising:  
a memory unit adapted to store a plurality of data;  
a printer unit adapted to perform print processing of data stored in said memory unit by using a resource;  
an acceptor adapted to accept, via a user interface unit, an instruction for causing user's ~~a local~~ device and another ~~an other~~ image output device to execute ~~start~~ a

cascade printing operation that print processing of a series of data is able to allot to said user's local device and said another other image output device, from a user; and

a controller adapted to prohibit a reception of the instruction via said user interface unit from the user in a case where a certain resource is not set in both of said user's device and said another image output device even if said another image output device has the same function as said user's device has, and to permit the reception of the instruction via said user interface unit from the user in a case where the certain resource is set in both of said user's device and said another image output device,

where said controller allows execution of the cascade printing operation in said user's device and said another image output device, after permitting the reception of the instruction via said user interface unit from the user and accepting the instruction via said user interface unit

~~a controller adapted to permit an execution of the cascade printing operation in said local device and said other image output device, according to the instruction from the user, when a certain resource is set in both of said local device and said other image output device;~~

~~wherein said controller inhibits an execution of the cascade printing operation that uses a different resource in each of said local device and said other image output device, before the instruction from user is accepted, even if said other image output device has the same function as the function that said local device has when the certain resource is not set in both of said local device and said other image output device.~~

43. (Currently Amended) A system according to claim 42, wherein said controller inhibits the execution of the cascade printing operation before the instruction from the user is accepted, by controlling beforehand said acceptor so as to not accept the instruction from the user, even if said ~~other~~ another image output device has the same function as the function that said ~~local~~ user's device has, when the certain resource is not set in both of said user's ~~local~~ device and said another ~~other~~ image output device.

44. (Currently Amended) A system according to claim 42, wherein the instruction is accepted via a user interface unit including a display unit used for said image output device, and

wherein said controller inhibits the execution of the cascade printing operation before the instruction from the user is accepted, by controlling a display of said display unit so as not to accept the instruction, even if said ~~other~~ another image output device has the same function as the function that said ~~local~~ user's device has, when the certain resource is not set in both of said user's ~~local~~ device and said another ~~other~~ image output device.

45. (Previously Presented) A system according to claim 42, wherein each of said plural image output devices includes an original image reading unit.

46. (Previously Presented) A system according to claim 42, wherein each of said plural image output devices is arranged so as to effect the cascade printing

operation of at least one of image data output from a scanner and image data output from a computer.

47. (Currently Amended) A system according to claim 42, wherein each of said plural image output devices includes an obtaining unit adapted to obtain information of the another ~~other~~ image output device ~~devices~~, and wherein said controller discriminates the output medium using the information obtained by said obtaining unit.

48. (Currently Amended) A system according to claim 42, wherein said controller permits the execution of the cascade printing operation in said ~~local~~ user's device and said ~~other~~ another image output device, according to the instruction from the user, when the same output medium is set in both of said user's ~~local~~ device and said another ~~other~~ image output device,

wherein said controller inhibits the execution of the cascade printing operation that uses a different output medium in each of said ~~local~~ user's device and said ~~other~~ another image output device, before the instruction from the user is accepted, even if said ~~other~~ another image output device has the same function as the function which includes at least one of a sort function and a double-side printing function that said ~~local~~ user's device has, when the same output medium is not set in both of said user's ~~local~~ device and said another ~~other~~ image output device.

49. (Currently Amended) A system according to claim 42, wherein said controller permits the execution of the cascade printing operation in said user's local device and said another other image output device, according to the instruction from the user, when an output medium of the same size is set in both of said user's local device and said another other image output device,

wherein said controller inhibits the execution of the cascade printing operation that uses an output medium of a different size in each of said user's local device and said another other image output device, before the instruction from the user is accepted, even if said other another image output device has the same function as the function which includes at least one of a sort function and a double-side printing function that said local user's device has, when the output medium of the same size is not set in both of said user's local device and said another other image output device.

50. (Currently Amended) A system according to claim 42, wherein said controller permits the execution of the cascade printing operation in said user's local device and said another other image output device, according to the instruction from the user, when an output medium of the same type is set in both of said user's local device and said another other image output device,

wherein said controller inhibits the execution of the cascade printing operation that uses an output medium of a different type in each of said user's local device and said another other image output device, before the instruction from the user is accepted, even if said other another image output device has the same function as the

function which includes at least one of a sort function and a double-side printing function that said user's local device has, when the output medium of the same type is not set in both of said user's local device and said another other image output device.

51. (Currently Amended) A system according to claim 42, wherein said controller permits the execution of the cascade printing operation in said user's local device and said another other image output device, according to the instruction from the user, when an output medium of the same size and the same type is set in both of said user's local device and said another other image output device,

wherein said controller inhibits the execution of the cascade printing operation that uses an output medium of a different size and a different type in each of said user's local device and said another other image output device, before the instruction from the user is accepted, even if said other another image output device has the same function as the function which includes at least one of a sort function and a double-side printing function that said user's local device has, when the output medium of the same size and the same type is not set in both of said user's local device and said another other image output device.

52. (Currently Amended) A method of operating an image output system which includes plural image output devices, wherein each of the plural image output devices includes a memory unit adapted to store a plurality of data and includes a

printer unit adapted to perform print processing of data stored in the memory unit to an output medium, said method comprising:

a step of accepting, via a user interface unit, inputting an instruction for causing said plural image output devices to execute ~~start~~ a cascade printing operation that print processing of a series of data is able to allot with said the plural image output devices, from a user;

a step of prohibiting a reception of the instruction via said user interface unit from the user in a case where the same output medium is not set in each of said plural image output devices;

a step of permitting the reception of the instruction via said user interface unit from the user in a case where the same output medium is set in each of said plural image output devices; and

a step of allowing an execution of the cascade printing operation in each of said plural image output devices, after permitting the reception of the instruction via said user interface unit from the user and accepting the instruction via said user interface unit

~~a step of permitting an execution of the cascade printing operation in the plural image output devices, when the instruction from the user is input, in a case where the same output medium is set in each of said plural image output devices; and~~

~~a step of inhibiting an execution of the cascade printing operation that uses a different output medium in each of the plural image output devices, before the instruction from the user is input, when the same output medium is not set in each of the plural image output devices.~~

53. (Currently Amended) A method according to claim 52, wherein said method inhibits the execution of the cascade printing operation before the instruction from the user is input, by controlling beforehand a said user interface unit so as to not input the instruction from the user, when the same output medium is not set in each of the plural image output devices.

54. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 52, wherein the instruction is input via a user interface unit including a display unit, wherein said method inhibits the execution of the cascade printing operation before the instruction from the user is input, by controlling a display of the display unit so as to not input the instruction, when the same output medium is not set in each of the plural image output devices.

55. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 52, wherein each of the plural image output devices is arranged so as to print at least one of image data output from a scanner and image data output from a computer, wherein said inputting step includes a step of inputting the instruction via a user interface unit which includes a display unit of the computer, and wherein said inhibiting step includes a step of controlling display by the display unit of the computer so as not to accept the instruction from the user when the same output medium is not set in each of said image output devices, thereby inhibiting the execution of the cascade printing operation before acceptance of the instruction.

56. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 52, wherein each of the plural image output devices is arranged so as to print at least one of image data output from a scanner and image data output from a computer, wherein said inputting step includes a step of inputting the instruction via a user interface unit which includes a display unit used in each of the plural image output devices, and wherein said inhibiting step includes a step of controlling display by the display unit of the image output device so as not to accept the instruction from the user when the same output medium is not set in each of the plural image output devices, thereby inhibiting the execution of the cascade printing operation before acceptance of the instruction.

57. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 52, wherein each of the plural image output devices includes an image forming device of composite function type, which has a copy function and a print function.

58. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 52, further comprising:

a step of obtaining information of at least one of the plural image output devices; and

a step of displaying the obtained information of the image output device on a display unit.

59. (Currently Amended) A method of operating an image output system which includes plural image output devices, wherein each of the plural image output devices includes a memory unit adapted to store a plurality of data and includes a printer unit adapted to perform print processing of data stored in the memory unit to an output medium, said method comprising:

a step of accepting, via a user interface unit, inputting an instruction for causing said plural image output devices to execute ~~start~~ a cascade printing operation that print processing of a series of data is able to allot with said ~~the~~ plural image output devices, from a user;

a step of prohibiting a reception of the instruction via said user interface unit from the user in a case where an output medium of the same size is not set in each of said plural image output devices;

a step of permitting the reception of the instruction via said user interface unit from the user in a case where the output medium of the same size is set in each of said plural image output devices; and

a step of allowing an execution of the cascade printing operation in each of said plural image output devices, after permitting the reception of the instruction via said user interface unit from the user and accepting the instruction via said user interface unit

~~a step of permitting an execution of the cascade printing operation in the plural image output devices, when the instruction from the user is input, in a case where an output medium of the same size is set in each of the plural image output devices; and~~

~~a step of inhibiting an execution of the cascade printing operation that uses an output medium of a different size in each of the plural image output devices, before the instruction from the user is input, when the output medium of the same size is not set in each of said plural image output devices.~~

60. (Currently Amended) A method according to claim 59, wherein said method inhibits the execution of the cascade printing operation before the instruction from the user is input, by controlling beforehand a said user interface unit so as not to input the instruction from the user, when the output medium of the same size is not set in each of the plural image output devices.

61. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 59, wherein the instruction is input via a user interface unit including a display unit, and wherein said method inhibits the execution of the cascade printing operation before the instruction from the user is input, by controlling a display of the display unit so as to not input the instruction, when the output medium of the same size is not set in each of the plural image output devices.

62. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 59, wherein each of the plural image output devices is arranged so as to print at least one of image data output from a scanner and image data output from a computer, wherein said inputting step includes a step of inputting the instruction via a user interface unit which includes a display

unit of the computer, and wherein said inhibiting step includes a step of controlling display by the display unit of the computer so as not to accept the instruction from the user when the same output medium is not set in each of the plural image output devices, thereby inhibiting the execution of the cascade printing operation before acceptance of the instruction.

63. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 59, wherein each of the plural image output devices is arranged so as to print at least one of image data output from a scanner and image data output from a computer, wherein said inputting step includes a step of inputting the instruction via a user interface unit which includes a display unit used in each of the plural image output devices, and wherein said inhibiting step includes a step of controlling display by the display unit of the image output device so as not to accept the instruction from the user when the same output medium is not set in each of the plural image output devices, thereby inhibiting the execution of the cascade printing operation before acceptance of the instruction.

64. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 59, wherein each of the plural image output devices includes an image forming device of composite function type, which has a copy function and a print function.

65. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 59, further comprising:

a step of obtaining information of at least one of the plural image output devices; and

a step of displaying the obtained information of the image output device on a display unit.

66. (Currently Amended) A method of operating an image output system which includes plural image output devices, wherein each of the plural image output devices includes a memory unit adapted to store a plurality of data and includes a printer unit adapted to perform print processing of data stored in the memory unit to an output medium, said method comprising:

a step of accepting, via a user interface unit, inputting an instruction for causing said plural image output devices to execute ~~start~~ a cascade printing operation that print processing of a series of data is able to allot with said ~~the~~ plural image output devices, from a user;

a step of prohibiting a reception of the instruction via said user interface unit from the user in a case where an output medium of the same type is not set in each of said plural image output devices;

a step of permitting the reception of the instruction via said user interface unit from the user in a case where the output medium of the same type is set in each of said plural image output devices; and

a step of allowing an execution of the cascade printing operation in each of said plural image output devices, after permitting the reception of the instruction via said user interface unit from the user and accepting the instruction via said user interface unit

~~a step of permitting an execution of the cascade printing operation in the plural image output devices, when the instruction from the user is input, in a case where an output medium of the same type is set in each of the plural image output devices; and~~

~~a step of inhibiting an execution of the cascade printing operation that uses an output medium of a different type in each of the plural image output devices, before the instruction from the user is input, when the output medium of the same type is not set in each of the plural image output devices.~~

67. (Currently Amended) A method according to claim 66, wherein said method inhibits the execution of the cascade printing operation before the instruction from the user is input, by controlling beforehand a said user interface unit so as not to input the instruction from the user, when the output medium of the same type is not set in each of the plural image output devices.

68. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 66, wherein the instruction is input via a user interface unit including a display unit, and wherein said method inhibits the execution of the cascade printing operation before the instruction from the user is input, by controlling a display of the display unit so as to not input the

instruction, when the output medium of the same type is not set in each of said plural image output devices.

69. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 66, wherein each of the plural image output devices is arranged so as to print at least one of image data output from a scanner and image data output from a computer, wherein said inputting step includes a step of inputting the instruction via a user interface unit which includes a display unit, and wherein said inhibiting step includes a step of controlling display by said display unit so as not to accept the instruction from the user when the same output medium is not set in each of the plural image output devices, thereby inhibiting the execution of the cascade printing operation before acceptance of the instruction.

70. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 66, wherein each of the plural image output devices is arranged so as to print at least one of image data output from a scanner and image data output from a computer, wherein said inputting step includes a step of inputting the instruction via a user interface unit which includes a display interface unit which includes a display unit used in each of said plural image output devices, and wherein said inhibiting step includes a step of controlling display of the display unit of the image output device so as not to accept the instruction from the user when the same output medium is not set in each of the plural image output devices, thereby inhibiting the execution of the cascade printing operation before acceptance of the instruction.

71. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 66, wherein each of the plural image output devices includes an image forming device of composite function type, which has a copy function and a print function.

72. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 66, further comprising:

a step of obtaining information of at least one of the plural image output devices; and

a step of displaying the obtained information of the image output device on a display unit.

73. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 66, wherein the type of the output medium is at least one of ordinary paper, card, thin paper, OHP and color sheet.

74. (Currently Amended) A method of operating an image output system which includes plural image output devices, wherein each of the plural image output devices includes a memory unit adapted to store a plurality of data and includes a printer unit adapted to perform print processing of data stored in the memory unit to an output medium, said method comprising:

a step of accepting, via a user interface unit, inputting an instruction for causing said plural image output devices to execute start a cascade printing operation that

print processing of a series of data is able to allot with said the plural image output devices, from a user;

a step of prohibiting a reception of the instruction via said user interface unit from the user in a case where an output medium of the same size and the same type is not set in each of said plural image output devices;

a step of permitting the reception of said instruction via said user interface unit from the user in a case where the output medium of the same size and the same type is set in each of said plural image output devices; and

a step of allowing an execution of the cascade printing operation in each of said plural image output devices, after permitting the reception of the instruction via said user interface unit from the user and accepting the instruction via said user interface unit

~~a step of permitting an execution of the cascade printing operation in the plural image output devices, when the instruction from the user is input, in a case where an output medium of the same size and the same type is set in each of said plural image output devices; and~~

~~a step of inhibiting an execution of the cascade printing operation that uses an output medium of a different size and different type in each of the plural image output devices, before the instruction from the user is input, when the output medium of the same size and the same type is not set in each of the plural image output devices.~~

75. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 74, wherein said method inhibits the execution of the cascade printing operation before the instruction

from the user is input, by controlling beforehand a said user interface unit so as to not input the instruction from the user, when the output medium of the same size and the same type is not set in each of the plural image output devices.

76. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 74, wherein the instruction is input via a user interface unit including a display unit, and wherein said method inhibits the execution of the cascade printing operation before the instruction from the user is input, by controlling a display of the display unit so as not to input said instruction, when the output medium of the same size and the same type is not set in each of the plural image output devices.

77. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 74, wherein each of the plural image output devices is arranged so as to print at least one of image data output from a scanner and image data output from a computer, wherein said inputting step includes a step of inputting the instruction via a user interface unit which includes a display unit, and wherein said inhibiting step includes a step of controlling display by the display unit so as not to accept the instruction from the user when the same output medium is not set in each of the plural image output devices, thereby inhibiting the execution of the cascade printing operation before acceptance of the instruction.

78. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 74, wherein each of the plural image output devices is arranged so as to print at least one of image data

output from a scanner and image data output from a computer, wherein said inputting step includes a step of inputting the instruction via a user interface unit which includes a display unit used in each of said plural image output devices, and wherein said inhibiting step includes a step of controlling display by the display unit of the image output device so as not to accept the instruction from the user when the same output medium is not set in each of the plural image output devices, thereby inhibiting the execution of the cascade printing operation before acceptance of the instruction.

79. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 74, wherein each of the plural image output devices includes an image forming device of composite function, which has a copy function and a print function.

80. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 74, further comprising:

a step of obtaining information of at least one of the plural image output devices; and

a step of displaying the obtained information of the image output device on a display unit.

81. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 74, wherein the type of the output medium is at least one of ordinary paper, card, thin paper, OHP and color sheet.

82. (Currently Amended) A method of operating an image output system which includes plural image output devices, wherein each of the plural image output devices includes a memory unit adapted to store a plurality of data and includes a printer unit adapted to perform print processing of data stored in the memory unit by using a resource, said method comprising:

a step of accepting, via a user interface unit, inputting an instruction for causing said plural image output devices to execute start a cascade printing operation that print processing of a series of data is able to allot with said the plural image output devices, from a user;

a step of prohibiting a reception of the instruction via said user interface unit from the user, even if each of said plural image output devices has the same function, in a case where certain resource is not set in each of said plural image output devices;

a step of permitting the reception of the instruction via said user interface unit from the user in a case where the certain resource is set in each of said plural image output devices; and

a step of allowing an execution of the cascade printing operation in each of said plural image output devices, after permitting the reception of the instruction via said user interface unit from the user and accepting the instruction via said user interface unit was accepted

~~a step of permitting an execution of the cascade printing operation in the plural image output devices, when the instruction from the user is input, in a case where a certain resource is set in each of the plural image output devices; and~~

~~a step of inhibiting an execution of the cascade printing operation that uses a different resource in each of the plural image output devices, before the instruction from the user is input, even if each of the plural image output devices has the same function when the certain resource is not set in each of the plural image output devices.~~

83. (Currently Amended) A method according to claim 82, wherein said method inhibits the execution of the cascade printing operation before the instruction from the user is input, by controlling beforehand a said user interface unit so each of the plural image output devices has the same function, when the certain resource is not set in each of the plural image output devices.

84. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 82, wherein the instruction is input via a user interface unit which includes a display unit, wherein said method inhibits the execution of the cascade printing operation before the instruction from the user is input, by controlling a display of the display unit so as not to accept the instruction, even if each of said plural image output devices has the same function, when the certain resource is not set in each of the plural image output devices.

85. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 82, wherein each of the plural image output devices is arranged so as to print at least one of image data output from a scanner and image data output from a computer, wherein said inputting step

includes a step of inputting the instruction via a user interface unit which includes a display unit, and wherein said inhibiting step includes a step of controlling display by the display unit so as not to accept the instruction from the user when the certain resource is not set in each of said plural image output devices, thereby inhibiting the execution of the cascade printing operation before acceptance of the instruction.

86. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 82, wherein each of the plural image output devices is arranged so as to print at least one of image data output from a scanner and image data output from a computer, wherein said inputting step includes a step of inputting the instruction via a user interface unit which includes a display unit used in each of the plural image output devices, and wherein said inhibiting step includes a step of controlling display by the display unit of the image output device so as not to accept the instruction from the user when the certain resource is not set in each of the plural image output devices, thereby inhibiting the execution of the cascade printing operation before acceptance of the instruction.

87. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 82, wherein each of the plural image output devices includes an image forming device of composite function type, which has a copy function and a print function.

88. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 82, further comprising:

a step of obtaining information of at least one of the plural image output devices; and

a step of displaying the obtained information of the image output device on a display unit.

89. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 82, wherein said method permits the execution of the cascade printing operation in the plural image output devices, according to an input of the instruction from the user, when the same output medium is set in each of the plural image output devices,

wherein said method inhibits the execution of the cascade printing operation that uses a different output medium in each of said plural image output devices, before the instruction from the user is input, even if each of the plural image output devices has the same function which includes at least one of a sort function and a double-side printing function, when the same output medium is not set in each of the plural image output devices.

90. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 82, wherein said method permits the execution of the cascade printing operation in the plural image output devices, according to an input of the instruction from the user, when an output medium of the same size is set in each of the plural image output devices,

wherein said method inhibits the execution of the cascade printing operation that uses an output medium of a different size in each of the plural image output devices,

before the instruction from the user is input, even if each of the plural image output devices has the same function which includes at least one of a sort function and a double-side printing function, when the output medium of the same size is not set in each of the plural image output devices.

91. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 82, wherein said method permits the execution of the cascade printing operation in the plural image output devices, according to an input of the instruction from the user, when an output medium of the same type is set in each of the plural image output devices,

wherein said method inhibits the execution of the cascade printing operation that uses an output medium of a different type in each of said plural image output devices, before the instruction from the user is input, even if each of the plural image output devices has the same function which includes at least one of a sort of function and a double-side printing function, when the output medium of the same type is not set in each of the plural image output devices.

92. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 82, wherein said method permits the execution of the cascade printing operation in the plural image output devices, according to an input of the instruction from the user, when an output medium of the same size and the same type is set in each of the plural image output devices,

wherein said method inhibits the execution of the cascade printing operation that uses an output medium of a different size and a different type in each of the plural image output devices, before the instruction from the user is input, even if each of the plural image output devices has the same function which includes at least one of a sort function and a double-side printing function, when the output medium of the same size and the same type is not set in each of the plural image output devices.

93. (Previously Presented) A storage medium for storing a computer readable program for causing a computer to execute the method of claim 52.

94. (Previously Presented) A storage medium for storing a computer readable program for causing a computer to execute the method of claim 59.

95. (Previously Presented) A storage medium for storing a computer readable program for causing a computer to execute the method of claim 66.

96. (Previously Presented) A storage medium for storing a computer readable program for causing a computer to execute the method of claim 74.

97. (Previously Presented) A storage medium for storing a computer readable program for causing a computer to execute the method of claim 82.